

WASHINGTON – Representative Xavier Becerra (CA – 31) submitted legislation today titled, “The Wartime Parity and Justice Act of 2003.” The legislation would provide reparations for Japanese Americans and Japanese Latin Americans who were interned by the United States Government during the Second World War.

Rep. Becerra issued the following statement today regarding Japanese American internment during World War II:

“On the eve of commemorating the 61st anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066, we as Americans see that there is still people in this country who choose to trivialize this issue, rather than properly reflect on the injustices brought upon 120,000 people simply because of the color of their skin when they were ordered interned.

“I consider Japanese American and Japanese Latin American internment to be a dark period in our nation’s history where our government inflicted a grave injustice upon it’s own people.

“This afternoon, I submitted for Congress’ consideration The Wartime Parity and Justice of 2003. If passed into law, the bill will provide reparations to those men and women of Japanese Latin descent who were kidnapped from Latin America and forced to reside in U.S. internment camps during the 1940s.

“Fifteen years ago, Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act that provided an official apology and redress to most of those confined in U.S. internment camps during World War II. But that is certainly not enough – there is still unfinished work needed to be done so as to properly close this unfortunate chapter in our nation's history. My legislation will not erase the mistake we made, but it will help right the wrong.”

The anniversary of Executive Order 9066 is February 19.